DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 425 790 JC 990 042

AUTHOR	Tichenor, Stuart
TITLE	Technical Writing I: ENGL 1033.
PUB DATE	1999-00-00
NOTE	87p.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom - Learner (051)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Classroom Techniques; Course Descriptions; Educational Objectives; Grammar; Higher Education; Instructional Materials; Sentence Structure; Student Needs; *Writing Instruction; *Writing Skills
IDENTIFIERS	Oklahoma State University Okmulgee

ABSTRACT

This document is a study guide for the Technical Writing I course at Oklahoma State University-Okmulgee. It focuses on the writing process and offers strategies for improving writing. The guide also covers writing for specific audiences and purposes. Sections include: (1) the course syllabus; (2) grading criteria; (3) basic computer skills; (4) technical writing basics; (5) using visual aids; (6) organizing writing; (7) revising sentences; (8) editing; and (9) writing assignments. Upon completion of this course, students should be able to determine how audience and purpose affect writing; focus on a topic and use pre-writing strategies; and write sentences and paragraphs, avoiding such sentence errors as fragments, run-on sentences, and comma splices. Students also should be able to revise and edit writing for errors in grammar and mechanics, construct well organized paragraphs containing sufficient transitions, and organize paragraphs into a coherent document using recognized patterns of organization. (AS)

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ED 425 790

TECHNICAL WRITING I
ENGL 1033

STUART TICHENOR
GENERAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
OSU-OKMULGEE

1998-1999

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OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY-OKMULGEE
COURSE SYLLABUS

GENERAL EDUCATION **COMMUNICATIONS**

COURSE NUMBER: ENGL 1033
COURSE TITLE: TECHNICAL WRITING I
CREDIT HOURS: THREE (3)

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Technical Writing I focuses on the writing process and strategies for improving writing. It also focuses on writing for specific audiences and for specific purposes.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: Upon completion of this course, students should be able to do the following:

- Determine how audience and purpose affect writing.
- Focus on a topic and use prewriting strategies.
- Write sentences and paragraphs, avoiding such sentence errors as fragments, run-on sentences, and comma splices.
- Revise and edit writing for errors in grammar and mechanics.
- Construct well organized paragraphs containing sufficient transitions.
- Organize paragraphs into a coherent document using recognized patterns of organization.

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

The Elements of Technical Writing, Thomas E. Pearsall and course packet.

2--3.5" diskettes

_____ / _____ _____ / _____

Instructor Date Department Head Date

If any member of the class feels that he/she has a disability and needs special accommodations of any nature whatsoever, the instructor will work with him/her and the University Office of Disabled Student Services to provide reasonable accommodations to ensure a fair opportunity to perform in this class. Please advise the instructor of such disability and the desired accommodations at some point before, during, or immediately following the first scheduled class period.

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MEMO

To: Technical Writing I students
From: Stuart Tichenor ST
Date: January 4, 1999
Subject: Classroom Policies and Procedures

Classroom Policies & Procedures
Instructors are responsible for their own classroom policies and procedures. Consult with your individual instructor if you have questions about grading policies, deadlines, attendance, and late work.

Use of 1998-1999 Study Guide
This study guide contains most of the assignments you will complete this semester. You should bring it to class every day and be prepared to use it as instructed.

Grading Criteria

A = Superior

- Paper meets or exceeds all the objectives of the assignment
- Content is mature, thorough, and well-suited for the audience
- Style is clear, accurate, and forceful
- Organization and format make the information understandable, accessible, and attractive
- Mechanics and grammar are correct

B = Good

- Paper meets the objectives of the assignment
- Style needs improvement
- Grammar, format, or content contains errors
- Content may be correct but is superficial

C = Competent

- Paper needs significant improvement in concept, details, development
- Organization, grammar, and format need improvement
- Content may be correct but is superficial

D = Marginally acceptable

- Paper meets some of the objectives but ignores others
- Content is inadequately developed
- Content contains numerous organizational, format, or grammar errors

F = Unacceptable

- Paper does not have enough information and does not meet requirements
- Content contains numerous organizational, format, or grammar errors

Tips for earning an A or B

- Attend class and complete daily work
- Include sufficient details and pay attention to organization and format
- **Ask for help if you don't understand something!**

Plagiarism

A paper which has been plagiarized (copied or paraphrased from another source) **will automatically receive a grade of ZERO.** You are expected to do your own writing and may not use other sources unless required by the instructor.

Don't Believe Everything You See!

I have a spell checker
It came with my PC
It plane lee marks four my revue
Miss steaks aye can knot see

Eye ran this poem threw it
Your sure real glad two no
Its very polished in its own weigh
My chequer tolled me sew

A cheek or is a blessing
It freeze yew lodes of thyme
It helps me right awl stiles two reed
And aides me when aye rime

Now spilling does not phase me
It does know bring a tier
My pay purrs awl due glad den
With wrapped words fare as hear

To rite with care is quite a feet
Of witch won should be proud
And wee mussed dew the best wee can
Sew flaws are know aloud

So ewe can sea why aye dew prays
Such soft wear for pea seas
And why eye brake in two averse
Buy righting want to please

Basic Computer Skills

As part of your coursework, you will be required to use word-processing programs in both the General Education Department and the Student Learning Center. Complete the following section. If you can do this exercise easily, you should have little or no trouble with the computerized part of the course. *Remember to always make a backup copy on disk! Your instructor cannot be responsible for computer failure, but will hold you responsible for still turning work in on time.*

Basic Computer Skills

Part of being a technical writing student is learning to make your computer work *for you.* Complete the following tasks; they're part of what you're going to need this semester!

Using WordPerfect 6.1

Any time you sit down in front of a computer, you need to know *what* you're using. In the Noble Center as well as in the Student Learning Center, WP 6.1 is available. Do not confuse it with Microsoft Word 6.0. They are different programs and not all programs are available in both buildings. However, you may want to "Save As" MS Word 6.0, so you can move back and forth between different computer labs

Saving a File

The first thing you should always do when starting to work on a new assignment is to *create a file* to work under. Then, every few minutes, you should save your work! Remember that it could be the difference between handing in a good assignment and not having anything to turn in!

Using the left mouse button, click on the word "File." Then, click on "Save As" and name your file. For this assignment, name the file--OrgExer. After you type in the name, click OK or press the Enter key.

After you have typed for 5 or 10 minutes, you can save your work by clicking on the diskette icon at the top of the screen. When you do, the cursor should turn into an hourglass.

Moving Text in a Paragraph

Type the following paragraph, *then move the first sentence to the end of the paragraph.*

Until the 1920s, diesels were used almost exclusively in stationary and marine installations. The Caterpillar diesel engine didn't just appear overnight. It was the culmination of years of patient research and testing. These efforts held an elemant of risk. There were those who thought it foolish to pour money into technology that at the time was considered "exotic." Early diesel engines were slow in speed and extremely hevi in relation to the power they produced.

Click down on the left mouse button and hold it. Then slowly drag the mouse across the screen from left to right. When you get to the right side, move down one line (still holding down the mouse button) and move from right to left. When you come to the period, release the mouse button.

Now move your mouse to the "copy" icon at the top of the screen. Click on that. Then click on the "Cut" icon. Move your cursor to the end of the paragraph and click the "Paste" icon.

Resave your work!

Copying and Moving a Paragraph

Now copy the entire paragraph, copy it and paste it just below the one that you've already typed in.

Creating New Paragraphs

Split the paragraph you just moved into **two** paragraphs by inserting your cursor after the word "exotic." Press the "Enter" key to create the new paragraph. Use the "Tab" key to indent the first line of each paragraph.

Changing Line Spacing

Highlight the two paragraphs you now have. Find the "Line Spacing" on the Power Bar (it should say "1.0"). Click on the button and change the line spacing to 2.0 (double-spacing). When you get done, you should have two paragraphs which are double-spaced.

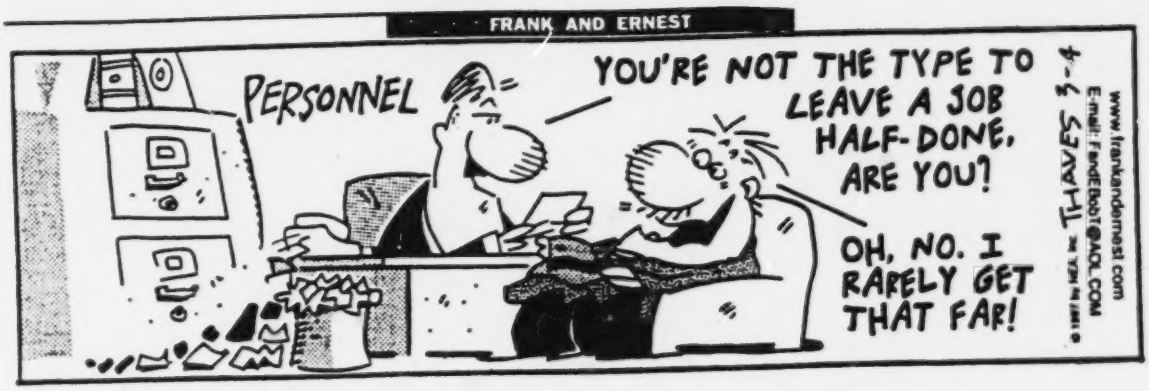
Changing Appearance of the Text

Using the same paragraph, highlight the word Caterpillar and click on the "b" located on the Toolbar.

Now *italicize* the word "diesel" and "diesels" in the same paragraph.

Spellcheck

Place your cursor at the first of the paragraph. Then, using the mouse, click on the Spellcheck icon at the top of the Toolbar. Correct any misspelled words.


FRANK AND ERNEST
PERSONNEL
YOU'RE NOT THE TYPE TO LEAVE A JOB HALF-DONE, ARE YOU?
OH, NO. I RARELY GET THAT FAR!
THAVES
www.frankandernest.com
E-mail: FandEBob1@AOL.COM

Technical Writing Basics

Technical writing is somewhat different from other kinds of writing you may have done. This section introduces you to basic strategies used in technical writing. As with all writing skills, these basics should be usable in a variety of situations. Study them, and when you have the chance, apply them to writing assignments in other classes.

Purpose

What you write directly affects *how* you write. For each different purpose, you must change your tone and focus. In addition, the language you use will also be directly affected. For instance, if a document is going to be submitted to an audience without your technical expertise, technical terms will need to be defined--and, more than likely, used much less than if the document was going to your immediate supervisor.

The assignments in this study guide, for the most part, work at achieving two purposes: to inform or to persuade. Look at the following types of documents and determine which purpose they are connected to--and why

- Resume and cover letter_____
- Problem-Solving Report_____
- Process Analysis_____
- Letter of Complaint_____
- Formal Proposal_____
- Memorandum_____
- Business Plan_____
- Letter of Denial_____
- Letter of Transmittal_____
- Technical description_____
- Instructions_____
- Summary_____

Assignment:
Bring an article to class (1-4 pages) from a professional trade journal. Determine the purpose of the article. Then, in memo format, explain how the content of the article would have to change *if the purpose* of the article was changed.

Audience Analysis

Who you write for almost always affects the way you write. Think for a few moments about the field or major you have chosen to study. Most likely, there is a large amount of technical information you need to know in order to become proficient. Even if you are "undecided," you're probably well-versed in some area of study which others may not know about. By the time you graduate (assuming you've chosen a program of study), you will be an "expert" in your field, knowing and using information others may never consider.

The people you will write *to* will determine the following:

- what you say
- how you say it
- how much detail you include
- the number of definitions
- specialized language vs. "plain" language
- formal vs. informal tone

Since readers of your writing may require different information, you should write with their needs in mind. Several factors help determine how to write for a specific audience. The most important consideration may be *who you are writing for.* The second most important consideration may be their background. Shown below are some characteristics which should be considered when writing:

Factors to consider

Education

- Refers to academic *and* technical education
  - Is the reader trained in the same area/field you are writing about?
  - Is the reader familiar with the general industry or a specialist in another field?
  - Would definitions and longer explanations be necessary?

Expertise

- Determines the types and numbers of details to include for the reader
  - Experts need fewer examples and definitions
  - Vocabulary changes with level of expertise
  - Definitions and explanations will vary with degree of expertise

Use of the document

- The type of document also helps determine how you write.
  - Why is the reader going to read what you've written?
  - Is the reader making some kind of decision based on your writing?
  - Is the reader learning a new skill or learning a new process?
  - Are you trying to solve a problem?
  - Are you applying for a job?

Assignment:

- Find an article, 2-3 pages long, from a professional trade journal
- Read the article
- According to the information on the previous page, write a brief report (1-2 pages) explaining what kind of education the reader *probably* has, what type of expertise the reader *should have* in order to understand the article, and *what the reader's purpose* is for reading the article.

Guidelines:

- Memo format
- Single-space, block paragraphs
- Topic headings
- Limit paragraphs to 6-8 lines of type
- Address the *education, expertise, and use* factors

Purpose *and* Audience

Each audience has different needs--which means that for one topic or document, you might need to include several kinds of information. Always consider what kind of information your readers require--based on the purpose of the document:

- What kind of information do readers need?
- Why do they need it?
- What is the best way to present it?
- What is the level of technical expertise of your readers?
- Is there more than one level of readers for your document?
- How will that affect what you say? How you say it?
- How do purpose and audience, combined, determine what you write?

Assignment:

The company you work for needs to upgrade its equipment (type of equipment can vary according to your situation). Your supervisor has assigned you to find the right kind of equipment, at the right price and present that information at a meeting of managers and supervisors by the end of the month. Refer to the above questions when describing how you will accomplish this task.

Type up your answers---we *will* discuss them in class.

Topic Headings

Headings help call attention to information you want readers to see. By using headings, you show readers how you've organized the information you are presenting. Using them also helps readers decide whether or not to read that particular section of your document.

As a writer, you can use headings to help you organize information you need to present. By doing so, you have a rough "outline" of what you need to cover in your document.

The size of your headings also helps readers--use the largest heading for a major topic, and use smaller headings for minor topics or subtopics. Shown below are different levels of headings. Font and type size may vary, according to your needs. ***However, headings should always appear in boldface type !***

Accessibility:
Headings also allow you to present information in chunks--that helps make reading less intimidating, especially in long documents. When technical writers discuss headings, they talk about the "levels." Look at the examples below and compare their differences.

Levels of Headings:

LEVEL 1 HEADING
Typically reserved for chapter titles--or, sometimes, titles on report cover pages. This Level 1 Heading is in Universal, all caps, 16 point, bold.

Level 2 Heading
Subtopics may appear as slightly smaller--in the same font--but may be distinguished by upper and lower case letters. This heading is Universial, upper/lower case, 14 point, bold.

Level 3 Heading
Most documents written in Tech Writing I will only require two levels of headings. However, should three levels be necessary, a Level 3 Heading can appear in a different font and still smaller size. This Level 3 Heading is in Times New Roman, upper/lower case, 13 point, bold.

Level 4 Heading. In some cases, a fourth level of heading may be needed. This Level 4 Heading is an option. Notice its location.

Consistency:
Fonts and type sizes for headings may change. Many times, it's a matter of personal preference. For instance, most of the headings in this study guide begin on the left margin. However, they could just as well be centered. *Regardless of style,* the important thing to remember is ***consistency.***

All Level 1 headings, for instance, should be the same font, type size, and have the same location. If your headings are not consistent, you may confuse readers. Yet another variation is underlining--it's optional. If you use it, however, use it throughout the document.

Fonts
You should experiment with different fonts in software programs. Word processing programs such as WordPerfect, Microsoft Works, Microsoft Word, and others offer choices. Look at some of the fonts shown below and compare their similarities and differences.

Arial, 12 point (similar to Helv or Universal)
`Courier New, 12 point (similar to Courier)`
Times New Roman, 12 point (similar to Times Roman)

The above fonts were on Microsoft Word 3.0. Other fonts such as *Universal, Courier, Times, Times Roman,* and *Helvetica* are fairly common and acceptable. Different programs call their fonts by different names. *You should avoid script or ornate fonts which are difficult to read if more than a line or two is used*

Using Lists

One of the differences between Comp I writing and technical writing is the use of lists. In most composition courses, teachers emphasize writing in complete sentences and combining them into paragraphs. ***However,*** in technical writing, the goal of writing is to be concise and avoid any wordiness. Using "bullets" allows writers to present information in a very accessible manner which eliminates unnecessary words. Bullets also allow writers to list items without commenting on their importance. Numbered lists, on the other hand, may imply an order of importance.

Compare the paragraph below with the same information presented in list form. Which is easier to read?

During the course of this semester, students in Technical Writing I will write three major assignments and three minor writing assignments. They consist of a resume and letter of application. Following that, students will write a problem-solving report (sometimes called a "feasibility report"), followed by the Mini-Business Plan assignment.. Minor assignments include writing a letter of complaint and a process analysis

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Students in Technical Writing I will complete the following major assignments:

- Resume and Letter of Application
- Problem-Solving Report (feasibility report)
- Mini-Business Plan

Minor writing assignments include:

- Letter of Complaint
- Process Analysis

Students in Technical Writing I will complete the following assignments:

1. Resume and Letter of Application
2. Problem-Solving Report
3. Mini-Business Plan
4. Letter of Complaint
5. Process Analysis

Either one of the list forms above should be easier to retrieve information from than the brief paragraph which precedes them. *What do you think?*

Parallelism in Lists

When writing lists, it's important to keep the items "parallel." In other words, if the first word in a list begins with a verb, all items in the list should begin with a verb.

Faulty parallelism	Corrected parallelism
Reduce amount of labor required	Reduce amount of labor required
To increase production	Increase production
Finishing in the top three percent statewide	Finish in the top three percent statewide

How to Present Lists

Using lists to present information can give readers a clearer understanding of the information you're presenting. However, you do not want to just "drop" a list into your report or memo without explaining what it is and what is important about it. Use the following 3-step process to present lists in your writing.

Three Step Process:

Presenting lists should be a three step process: (1) ***introduce the list,*** (2) ***present the list,*** (3) ***comment on its importance.***

Introduce the list. Regardless of the content contained in the list, readers need to know *what* you're presenting. Therefore, a couple of sentences explaining "what follows" will help them understand the purpose of presenting the information in list format--rather than putting it in paragraph form.

Present the list. Add a space (1 blank line) after introducing the list. Another point to remember is that *one item* should not be carried to the top of the next page. Even though this may happen, try to avoid it. At the end of the list, add 1 blank line, and then begin your comments about the list.

Comment on the importance of the list. Many times, readers may not know the importance of what is presented in a list. A rule of thumb to remember is: if readers can misunderstand something, they will! To ensure readers get the correct message, follow the presentation of a list with what *you--as a technical writer*--want them to know. Otherwise, a faulty conclusion may be drawn and the information you have presented will serve only to confuse someone.

Conciseness

Get to the point! There's no sense in using up a half-page to say something if you can say it in two or three sentences. The same goes for individual sentences. Revise the sentences below and eliminate as many words as possible, *without changing the meaning*.

- In spite of the fact that this is a technical writing class, there is a lot of time spent thinking about how to say things that are not technical at all.

- Some writers tend to write and write and write and never say anything without repeating themselves at least a couple of thimes. And then they finally get to the point.

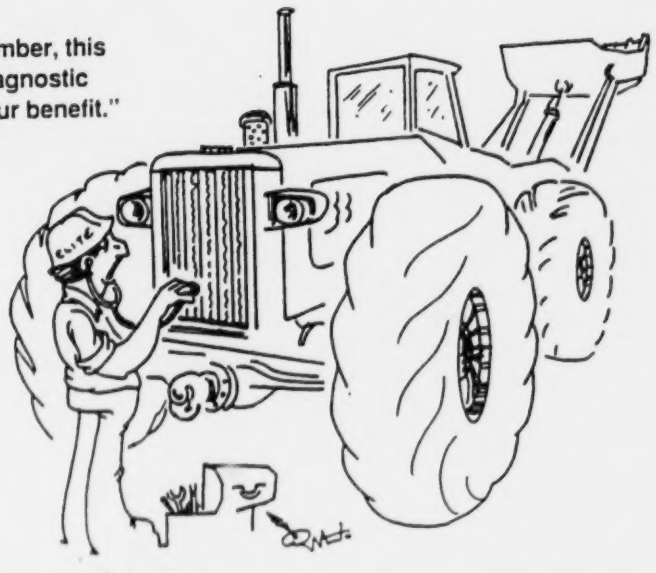
- To the best of my recollection, I think that I was at home asleep when the aforementioned burglary of several CDs took place on the night of June 17.

- I think we should completely eliminate the practice of giving midterm examinations to test students on their ability to remember all of the information that a teacher has given during the first seven weeks of school.

- First and foremost, our primary goal is to eliminate redundancies and, therefore, simplify our writing by being straight to the point and not repeating ourselves continually.

- When applying for financial aid, you must remember to fill out every single block on the forms, even if they do not apply to you personally.

"Relax . . . Remember, this personalized diagnostic testing is for your benefit."



Using Visual Aids

Technical writers frequently use graphics (tables, charts, drawings, photos, etc.) to enhance their writing. While most word processing packages such as WordPerfect 6.1 and Microsoft Word 6.0 have sophisticated graphics functions, visuals can also be created using "low-tech" methods. Presented in this section are three examples of simple graphics as well as guidelines for creating and presenting them.

How to Present Visual Aids

Using graphics as part of your writing can give readers a clearer understanding of the information you're presenting. Use them wisely. Avoid presenting "bells and whistles" which are pretty to look at but detract from the message being presented.

Three Step Process:

Presenting visuals should be a three step process: (1) ***introduce the visual,*** (2) ***present the visual,*** (3) ***comment on its importance.***

Introduce the visual. Regardless of the content contained in the visual aid, readers need to know *what* you're presenting. Therefore, a couple of sentences explaining "what follows" will help them understand the purpose of presenting information visually--rather than putting it in paragraph form.

Present the visual. Allow sufficient "white space" to surround the visual. Graphs and charts which are crowded up against text often appear intimidating or ineffective. In addition, you should try not to let a visual "hang" at the bottom of the page without any text. Try to present your visual so text surrounds it. This can often be done in some word processing programs by wrapping the text around the visual. However, you should be careful not to let the visual get too close to the edge of a page.

Comment on its importance. Many times, conclusions can be drawn from looking at information in charts and graphs. To ensure readers get the correct message, follow the presentation of your visual with what *you--as a technical writer*--want them to know. Otherwise, a faulty conclusion may be drawn and the information you have presented will serve only to confuse someone.

Using Visuals in Your Writing

Shown below are some very "low-tech" visuals which can enhance an explanation.

Guidelines:

- Label "tables" in the upper left-hand corner and include a title.
- Label "figures" in the lower left-hand corner and include a title.
- Present all visuals as a 3-step process--introduce, present, comment
    1. Introduce the visual--tell the reader what to expect
    2. Present the visual
    3. Comment or explain importance of what you've presented
- Surround visual with text--do not allow it to "hang" at the bottom of a page or run off the edge of a page
- Place visual close to text which explains it. Do not create a visual and stick it in the back of a report. Visuals are more effective when combined with text.
- Use two-dimensional visuals. 3D visuals which print out in black and white often do not work well.
- Use boldface type for "warnings."
- Avoid clutter--do not overload a chart or graph with information!

Figure 1., shown below, lists the basic costs for students and sponsors participating in the internship program. Some costs, such as tools, may vary with the needs of the job or requirements of the dealership.

	Sponsor	**Student**
Uniforms	$ --0--	$ 125.00
Tools	$ --0--	$1250.00
Scholarships	$1250.00	$ 250.00
Travel	$ --0--	$ 500.00
Books	$ 250.00	$ 250.00
Total Cost	**$1500.00**	**$2375.00**

Figure 1. Semester Cost for Sponsors and Interns

As Figure 1. shows, the student has a larger investment in the internship than the dealership does. If tools are considered, the students' investment will soon be much larger than the dealerships' because technicians are expected to continually purchase tools which will allow them to perform their duties more efficiently.

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Table 1., shown below, lists the dates for the Summer 1998 trimester at OSU-Okmulgee. Students are expected to be pre-enrolled before the trimester starts and arrange for travel to their dealerships before mid-trimester.

Table 1. Summer Calendar for First-Half Interns

April 29, 1998	Students attend 7 1/2 week classes at OSU-Okmulgee
June 19, 1998	Campus instruction ends
June 22, 1998	Students begin internship at dealership
August 21, 1998	Internship ends, students return to campus

The schedule shown above is typical for students in all internship programs. Instruction on the OSU-Okmulgee campus ends at midterm for first-half interns. For those interns who serve their internship *during* the first half of a trimester, the schedule is reversed. So, at the same time one group of interns is returning to the dealership, another group of interns is arriving on campus *from* an internship.

Visuals can also be used as a warning. In some forms of writing such as instructions or manuals, warnings, cautions, and notes are necessary for the safety of the reader. Using boldface type and boxes with heavy lines or background shading can help them stand out from the text and make them more visible.

WARNING: Failure to disconnect from the power supply can cause serious injury or death! Disconnect power supply before performing maintenance or beginning repairs.

NOTE: Refer to your textbook for other examples of visuals.

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Organizing Your Writing

In this section, you'll look at seven different ways to organize writing as well as when you might need to use them. You'll also learn about topic headings and when to use them. An exercise dealing with topic sentences and paragraph organization is included as well as an exercise for checking paragraph unity

Types of Organization

When you write, you put things in a particular order. How you do that depends on what you are writing, what your purpose is, and who you are writing to. Shown below are different ways of organizing your writing. You may use just one of them, or you may need to use two of them combined. Knowing what they are and when to use them can help you put information in its proper place--either inside a paragraph, essay, or technical document.

- Chronological
- Spatial
- Comparison/Contrast
- Classification
- Order of Importance
- Main idea/Significance
- Problem/Solution

When to use them

Chronological

Chronological organization is most often used when there is a passage of time. For instance, if you write a brief work history on a job application, you will probably list your most recent job first and then work backwards--that's chronological. Even if you listed your first job first and worked to the present, you would be using chronological order. On the job accident reports are another example--if someone was hurt and you saw it happen, you would be asked to write down how things happened. In this case, you would list what happened first, second, third, and so on.

Spatial (space)

Use spatial order when you need to use descriptive details. You should probably choose a sequence--for instance, right to left, top to bottom. Again using the idea of an accident report--you might describe where people were standing, where equipment was located, where people were working or standing, or where you were in relation to the accident. In this example, you might combine chronological and spatial types of organization because both time and space are involved.

Comparison/Contrast

Comparison and contrast are most frequently used when you need to show how details are similar and/or different. You might use this in a purely descriptive manner to show these

similarities and differences. Or, you might want to use this method of organization if you are evaluating a product based on its qualities, price, durability, etc.
For instance, if you were in the market for a new car, you might begin looking at Fords and Chevies. After a while, though, you notice that there are differences and trade-offs. In this example, you are comparing two cars (how they are similar) and contrasting them (how they are different).

Classification

Use this form of organization to classify people, events, or things by types or categories. For example--what if you walked through several different departments here at OSU-Okmulgee? What could you say about the students in Diesel and Heavy Equipment? How do they dress? How old are they? Writing a description like this would attempt to classify students by their program. You might also need to use comparison/contrast to show how these groups of students are similar or different. If you use this type of organization, make sure you clearly identify what you are trying to classify!

Order of Importance

This form of organization may be *least to most important* or *most to least important*. It might be used if you are writing a set of instructions for someone to follow. For instance, when I write an assignment, I try to write what is most important first--what you have to know before you do anything else!

Main idea/Significance

Stating the main idea in the very beginning allows readers to know *exactly* what you are discussing. After you have clearly stated the main idea, explain its significance. You may need to use several paragraphs (depending on the length and complexity of the topic). For instance, eliminating Student Financial Aid would be disastrous for students and schools alike. Several pages could be written explaining the significance of that topic.

Problem/Solution

Problem solving organization involves clearly stating the problem (and, perhaps, background information), then stating the possible solution. In feasibility reports, writers explain the problem, list criteria for a good solution, offer possible solutions, and then make recommendations. Each step--explaining, listing, offering, recommending--needs ample information to adequately explain why possible solutions are being offered and also why the recommendations listed are being made.

Assignment:

Choose one topic you are familiar with. Then, using that topic, **write a paragraph (5-6 sentences)** using each type of organization. You will notice that the content of your paragraph will change even though you are using the same general topic. Try to limit each paragraph to one type of organization.

Topic example: Working as a welder **Date due:**_____

Chronological--I could start with my last job, tell when I was laid off for the last time and then work backwards to when I started welding. Or, for just one paragraph, I might tell about the last six months of my last job leading up to the layoff. Either way, I am dealing with time--most recent to first--or first to most recent.

Spatial--Describing where I used to work, I might show how I had my work area arranged--where my toolbox sat, where my work table and welding machine were located, where the jib crane was located, and where my box fan was located. Using this type of organization, you gain an understanding of my "space."

Comparison/Contrast--Since I've worked with a lot of different kinds of welders, I might write about the similarities and differences between structural and pipeline welders. They have certain similarities, but there also some pretty distinct differences which I could list.

Classification--Again, discussing welding, I might write about the different types of welders. For example, there are code welders, pipeline welders, structural welders, hobby welders, production welders, ornamental iron welders, etc. Using this type of organization, you can group people (or objects) by shared characteristics.

Order of Importance--Still talking about welding--If I were to write a paragraph about how to strike an arc and "run a bead," the first thing I would tell you would be to lower your "hood" (welding helmet)! That's obviously the most important! If you didn't, the glare would "burn" your eyes and you'd walk around feeling like someone had rubbed gravel in them.

Main idea/Significance--For this type of organization, a writer could discuss the importance of keeping welding rods warm and dry (main idea). The significance might be that a welder working on pressure vessels needs moisture free welding rods in order to make X-ray quality welds. Adequate details are necessary to properly explain the significance in most cases.

Problem/Solution--"There's more than one way to skin a cat!" If a welder had a pallet full of bad parts but had discovered a way to salvage them, he/she could put in writing (length of the report would depend on the severity of the problem) the process needed to modify the parts so they would be usable. If more than one solution was possible, then all the solutions *could* be listed along with a recommendation about the *best* solution.

Topic Sentences and Paragraphs

How well your writing succeeds depends on how well you structure each individual paragraph. Although paragraphs are small units, they work as a whole to help you inform your reader. For that reason, you need to pay close attention to *each* paragraph. Without paragraphs that make sense, your reader will be confused and unsure about what you are trying to say through your writing.

Since each paragraph has a *topic sentence*, or controlling idea, you announce to your reader what you intend to discuss in that paragraph. If you do not follow through with supporting details, again, you confuse your reader. Each paragraph should have a specific purpose and should discuss no more than what you've stated in your topic sentence. If you fail to stick to the topic of your paragraph and include other unnecessary information, you do not achieve *paragraph unity.*

Listed below are three topic sentences. For each topic sentence, write a list of information which would show support.

1. Smokeless tobacco is not a safe alternative to smoking.

2. The most stress a college student faces occurs in the first semester.

3. Choosing a major may determine what type of General Education classes you take.

Topic Sentences

Writing paragraphs without topic sentences is like trying to drive through New York City without a map--if you don't know where you're going and what to expect when you get there, how will you know when you've arrived? Topic sentences provide readers with a "mini" road map. By clearly stating what you are going to discuss, you provide readers with "direction." Without that direction, you force readers to interpret what you plan to discuss; as a result, you stand a very good chance of being *misunderstood!*

The paragraphs below do not have topic sentences. Read them and write what you think would be an appropriate topic sentence. Be prepared to justify your answer.

1._____

_____

_____

When it is possible to perform the job with more commonly available tools, it will be pointed out. Occasionally, however, a special tool was designed to perform a specific function and should be used. Before substituting another tool, you should be convinced that neither your safety nor the performance of the vehicle will be compromised.

2._____

_____

_____

A letter from an ex-student to one of the authors illustrated this point rather painfully. He told us that in one instance he and his staff were choosing between two recent graduates who seemed equal in every professional way. The decision was finally made by taking the person who had prepared the neatest application. Seeking employment will thrust you into many such competitive situations, both written and oral. Your first contact with a potential employer may be by means of a letter of application and resume of your education and experience. You may also need to write requests for letters of recommendation and several follow-up letters, such as letters of acceptance and refusal. To help you successfully reach your goal of a job, we discuss all these communication situations in this chapter.

Checking for Paragraph Unity

Read the following paragraphs and underline the content which is irrelevant or does not belong. Remember that everything in the paragraph should support the topic sentence.

Technical writing is a major part of the working environment. In fact, almost anything that is written on the job can fall under the title of "technical writing." Through technical forms of writing, people send letters and memos, write proposals, compile reports, and provide documentation of workplace processes. The people who write these forms of communication are called technical writers, but anyone, no matter what their title, may be called on to produce such forms of writing. In addition, technical writing is used to generate sales, inform users of instructions, describe objects and mechanisms, and help you get a job. Without technical forms of writing, most businesses could not do business at all.

Personnel managers state that students should recognize that technical writing can help new employees further their careers and is a skill valued by many companies. In fact, corporate recruiters who visit college campuses regularly look for students who have good communication skills. If students have good writing skills, companies can rely on them to perform writing tasks instead of hiring someone special or contracting the writing (which always costs more). Students who already possess good writing skills will be more valuable also because it takes less time to train them. This, in turn, means that a new employee will be worth more to a company in a shorter period of time. In addition, students who can already write will not have to attend seminars conducted by consultants (which also cost a lot of money). By being on the job and not attending seminars to learn skills, students immediately become more valuable to companies and will, most likely, get promoted faster than those employees with little or no writing skills.

Stunt sends longhorns stampeding through town

NAPA, Calif. (AP) — Showing off "highly trained" longhorn cattle was supposed to rustle up interest in a local fair. But by the time the dust settled, the longhorns' stampede had knocked over street signs and smashed into police cars.

"They told us they were highly trained, that they could be controlled. Obviously they couldn't. I think we're lucky no one got hurt," said Lt. Michael Berg.

The herd of 25 longhorns were released in the center of town to help sell tickets for the Napa Town and Country Fair. They immediately began to devour city hall lawn and shrubs.

Then the rodeo organizers urged them along the one-mile "stampede" route to the fairgrounds. The longhorns took off, like the bulls at Pamplona.

Hooves scraped and skidded along the pavement Friday.

The cattle bumped into parked cars and knocked into street signs. One butted against the doors of the Redwood Bank while three employees held it shut.

"It's a good thing we never put in that automatic door we were talking about," said bank employee Lise Tarner.

Napa police could only stand by. At one point the longhorns smashed into the side of a sheriff's car.

Halfway to the fairgrounds, the longhorns ran into a line of anti-rodeo protesters who had vowed to block the stampede.

"We think they'll change their mind when they see 25 longhorn cattle bearing down on them, said Lt. Berg.

The protesters scattered at the last moment.

"It's hard on the animals," said Rod Surber of the Napa Valley People for Animal Rights. "People are yelling and screaming at them. They should have the right to be in a field somewhere and just be cows."

When the herd finally reached the fairgrounds, cowboys herded them back onto their truck. Fair organizers say they didn't know whether the run through town, in the rolling wine country 36 miles north of San Francisco, boosted ticket sales.

Crew Paves Road Over Dead Deer

ANDREAS, Pa. (AP) — Workers repairing a stretch of roadway paved straight over a dead deer that one official says was hard to miss.

A gooey spread of oil and rocks covers the deer's head, neck and shoulders along Route 895.

"The deer was lying there dead for three to four weeks," said Keith Billig, mayor of nearby Bowmanstown, about 65 miles northwest of Philadelphia. "I never saw anything like that before in my life."

It is against state policy to pave over a deer, said Walter Bortree, a Pennsylvania Department of Transportation engineer.

"We do not routinely oil and chip over deer kill," Bortree said. "If in fact the deer was in the work area, it should have been removed before the work was done."

Bortree said the private contractor that did the work for the state probably missed seeing the deer because it was on the edge of the road.

But Billig said the animal is in plain view.

"You can't miss it," he said. "It's in a s...aightaway. If they couldn't see it, then they can't see the numbers on their checks either."

Revising Sentences

Correct sentence structure is the basic building block of good writing. Problems with sentence structure--specifically, comma splices, run-ons and fragments--can change or confuse the meaning. To combat unclear writing, definitions of errors are given as well as methods for repairing these problems. The final part of this section deals with transitions, which help show relationships between correctly written sentences.

Comma Splices & Run-on Sentences

Comma splices and run-on sentences are sentence level errors which are undesirable in writing. Both deal with failing to separate two complete sentences. Comma splices are sentences which have been joined together with a comma. Run-ons are two sentences (or more) which are, literally, run together without any punctuation. Look at the examples below.

Comma Splices

Fred went shopping for a new car on Saturday, he didn't find what he wanted.

Tim also went shopping on Saturday, he was looking for a new computer.

Katrina wanted to go shopping with Fred, she stayed home because she was tired.

All three examples consist of two complete sentences, improperly joined with a comma.

Run-ons

Fred went shopping for a new car on Saturday he didn't find what he wanted.

Tim also went shopping on Saturday he was looking for a new computer.

Katrina wanted to go shopping with Fred she stayed home because she was tired.

The only difference between the run-ons above and the comma splices is the comma.

Repairing comma splices and run-ons

Fred went shopping for a new car on *Saturday. He* didn't find what he wanted.
(separate into two sentences with a period and capital letter)

Fred went shopping for a new car on *Saturday; he* didn't find what he wanted.
(separate into two sentences with a semicolon)

Fred went shopping for a new car on *Saturday; however,* he didn't find what he wanted.
(separate into two sentences with a semicolon and transition)

Fred went shopping for a new car on *Saturday, but* he didn't find what he wanted.
(use a comma and connecting word)

Editing Exercise

Read the following paragraphs. Find and correct the comma splices and run-on sentences. You may add or delete whatever is necessary (including punctuation) to form a correct sentence.

Of all the kinds of winds, tornadoes are the most violent. They normally do millions of dollars worth of damage each year. Tornadoes consist of winds with speeds of 60 or 70 miles per hour, some have speeds even higher and they cause the most deaths. These winds rotate in a counterclockwise direction and look like a funnel at the bottom of a cloud. Tornadoes are usually only a quarter of a mile wide and not more than 15 miles long, furthermore they don't last very long. Their coverage is small and their time is short yet in a few seconds they can leave a path of destruction.

A few safety tips are worth knowing they could save lives. Stay away from windows, doors, and outside walls shield your head. Go to a basement or the interior part of a first floor closets or interior halls are the best places. In the outdoors go to a sturdy shelter or lie in a ditch with your hands protecting your head. Spring is the tornado season, but tornadoes can strike at any time.

Parts of Oklahoma and Kansas are known as Tornado Alley, it is called that because there is a certain path which tornadoes tend to follow. However, tornadoes not only affect Oklahoma and Kansas but also other states, Iowa and Missouri have both suffered from devastating tornadoes thousands of people have been made homeless in those states, in addition, hundreds of head of cattle have been destroyed or lamed. Even in states like Alabama and Georgia tornadoes have destroyed homes and property. So far, scientists have been able to predict where tornadoes may occur, but they have not figured out a way to stop them maybe someday they will.

Editing Exercise

Correct the sentence structure errors in the paragraphs below.

As part of the enrollment process, each new student is issued a photo identification card, this card is used to establish the student's identity at OSU-Okmulgee and authorizes access to certain campus facilities and services the card should be carried by the student at all times for identification, there is no charge for the first card, however, a nominal fee is charged for lost or stolen cards.

OSU-Okmulgee operates a contract postal station located next to the Bookstore in the Student Union, students receive mail on campus either through a campus post office box, general delivery, or a residence hall box. Campus Post Office boxes can be rented for a nominal charge per semester. General delivery mail must be called for at the Post Office window students living in Twin Towers and Lackey Hall receive their mail in the Residence Halls.

The main function of the Student Life Department is to enhance the educational experience of OSU-Okmulgee students the Student Life Department provides a wide range of activities to students during their out of class time, all activities are provided at no cost to students Student Life also works closely with student organizations and serves as an advisor to these organizations, another function of Student Life is to provide and coordinate campus Wellness programs and activities for students and employees of OSU-Okmulgee through the campus wellness programs, OSU-Okmulgee students are encouraged and taught how to make the most of themselves physically and socially.

Covelle Hall houses a gymnasium, weight room, recreational equipment room, showers, sauna, and an auditorium students with a current ID are eligible to use the facilities or check out equipment. The gamefield-jogging course, located on the southeast edge of campus, is a self-guided exercise course which provides a total conditioning routine, it consists of 20 exercise stations on an 1/8 mile track, surrounded by a 1/4 mile track.

Fragments

Fragments are incomplete sentences and are undesirable in most writing They are used frequently, however, in advertising. Fragments you see in writing may lack a subject, verb, or both. Some fragments are caused by adding a dependent (danger word) word to a complete sentence. In addition, fragments are created by incorrectly splitting a sentence into two parts. Look at the examples below and determine how the fragments were created.

Examples

Peterbilt. Bilt to last.

Chevy tough. Like a rock.

We decided to stay at home. *Because it was raining.*

Since the last time I saw you at Wal-Mart. I have lost 20 pounds.

She stayed home from the mall. *Hoping to find a bargain at the antique auction.*

To help him get over his sore throat. John gargled with lemon juice and salt water.

Trying to stay out of the wind and snow. The cattle gathered on the south side of the barn.

The truck driver pulled off the road. *To keep from obstructing traffic.*

Repairing Fragments

Most of the time, fragments can be repaired by combining them with either the sentence preceding them or the sentence following them.

We decided to stay at home because it was raining.

Since the last time I saw you at Wal-Mart, I have lost 20 pounds.

She stayed home from the mall, hoping to find a bargain at the antique auction.

To help him get over his sore throat, John gargled with lemon juice and salt water.

Trying to stay out of the wind and snow, the cattle gathered on the south side of the barn.

The truck driver pulled off the road to keep from obstructing traffic.

Danger Words and Fragments

Danger words--sometimes called "dependent words"--are often what cause writers to produce fragments. Look at the list and make sure you pay attention to how they are used in your writing!

after	how	until	which
although	if	what	whichever
as	in order that	whatever	while
as if	since	when	who
because	so that	whenever	whom
before	than	where	whose
even if	that	whereas	why
even though	though	wherever	
ever since	unless	whether	

Danger words, Fragments, and Commas

If you have a fragment beginning with a danger word and you want to join it to a complete sentence which follows, you must use a comma at the end of the fragment.

Example: *Since* it rained, we decided to stay home.

However, if your danger word is in the middle of the sentence (with the fragment at the end of the sentence) you would not need the comma.

Example: We decided to stay home *since* it rained.

Shown below are more examples.

Although we were not speeding, the highway patrol pulled us over.
The highway patrol pulled us over *although* we were not speeding.

Unless we get our order soon, we are going somewhere else to eat.
We are going somewhere else to eat *unless* we get our order soon.

Since we have class three days a week, it really gets boring.
It really gets boring *since* we have class three days a week.

When it gets dark, the temperature drops about fifteen degrees.
The temperature drops about fifteen degrees *when* it gets dark.

Because it was cold and wet, we decided not to go the concert.
We decided not to go to the concert because it was cold and wet.

Danger Words & Fragments

If you add a danger word to a complete sentence, it becomes a fragment!

We finished the game. (this is a complete sentence)

But--if you add a danger word: *After* we finished the game. (you've created a fragment)

Look at the sentences below and decide whether or not they contain fragments. Do what is necessary to correct the errors.

1. We wanted to see Michael Jordan play. Because he was our favorite basketball player.

2. After the Chicago Bulls won the game. Someone threw a smoke bomb into the crowd.

3. Since the crowd was unruly and loud, extra police were called in to patrol the parking lots.

4. I used to go to Bulls games all the time even though the tickets were expensive.

5. Even though tickets are supposed to go up again. I may continue going to Bulls games.

Mark the errors in the following paragraph. Remember that you are looking for danger words and fragments only.

When I first came to college, I didn't think too much about how much I would have to study. Until I finished the first week of classes. By the time I'd been to all of my classes two or three times, I realized that there would be a lot of time spent studying. Because of the time I would have to spend studying. I would not be able to find a part-time job to help with my expenses. That doesn't bother me too much because I will get some money from Financial Aid. Although it may not get here until about midterm. Unless somebody builds a fire under someone. It's hard to tell just when I will get my loan money. However, my parents said I was coming to school to get an education. Not to work at a convenience store or Wal-Mart. Before I go to bed tonight. I have to read at least 25 pages so I'll be ready for my first class at 7:30 in the morning. Unless I skip class.

Editing Exercise

Find the fragments in the following paragraphs. Change each fragment into a complete sentence. You may change anything you need in order to fix the problem.

When I first got out of high school, I went to work at the local Burger King. At the time, I thought it was a pretty good job. Because they paid me $1.25 over minimum wage. Since I was still living with my parents, my expenses were low. There were no utilities to pay and no phone bills to pay. The money I made was all mine. But then Dad got sick and couldn't work anymore. When my parents asked me to start help paying bills. I realized that my little paycheck would not last long. My boss agreed to give me some overtime hours. Allowed me to work on the weekends more and certain holidays. However, none of that really helped.

When Dad got to where he could go back to work, we sat down and discussed what I should do with my future. Realizing that turning hamburgers would not let me support my girlfriend and me. I decided to go back to school and learn a trade that would help me get a better paying job. When I first heard of OSU-Okmulgee, I didn't know it had so many different programs. Programs that are widely recognized. One that really caught my attention was the Culinary Arts program. The Culinary Arts program is widely recognized. People who have graduated from the program work in major hotels and restaurants. All over the United States.

Now that my Dad is able to go back to work full-time. I plan on going back to school. Although I won't be able to help my parents anymore, they realize that my future depends on my being able to get a good paying job. My girlfriend and I are not going to get married until I graduate from school. Meanwhile, she will keep working and help me type my homework assignments. That always seem to pile up faster than I care to think about.

Editing Exercise

Correct the fragments in the paragraphs below. You may add/delete words and punctuation to correct the errors.

OSU-Okmulgee is one of three schools in the Oklahoma State University college system. Focusing on technical careers and vocations. It draws students from at least a dozen surrounding states. And seven foreign countries. Two programs that are offered here, Watch & Microinstrument Repair and Shoe, Boot, & Saddle, are unique to this school and are rarely found at other institutions. Because of the programs' uniqueness which enroll a limited number of students. They are sometimes overlooked by students who are not aware of them. However, they remain an important part of the school's curriculum and graduate students every trimester.

This popularity as a technical school draws students of all ages, many who are retraining for new careers. Many of these students are beginning second careers after being laid off by major corporations. Their livelihood cut short by downsizing. Some of these older students are attending school as displaced workers or on vocational rehab funding. They form an important part of the student population. For a number of reasons. As students who have lots of lifetime experiences, they bring a maturity to the classroom and campus. Which is recognized by the faculty.

Typical of most two-year college campuses, OSU-Okmulgee has a large traditional-age student body. Most of which is male. Males outnumber females on campus approximately 3 to 1. A fairly large number of students are young, married students or single mothers. Many of these two groups live in married housing and take advantage of the campus day-care center. Located in Covelle Hall on the south side of the campus. The diversity of students on the OSU-Okmulgee campus give it a special atmosphere because no other school in eastern Oklahoma has a mixture of students and programs which are so unique.

Editing Exercise

Edit the following paragraphs. Correct *sentence structure* and eliminate *wordiness*. In some cases, you may need to add specific information to make the information more *concise* (changes can vary).

After I had got to school here for awhile, I started going to the weight room. Mostly in the evenings. At first, the machines didn't make too much sense and it seemed like I wasn't getting anywhere. Because all I did was get sore. Then, I started reading the wall charts and talking to more experienced weight lifters. From what they said, it would take awhile to see some gains. I thought the idea was to lift as much as possible but that isn't the way it works, the idea is to start out slow and use lots of reps with lighter weights, later you can change what you do. Then, as your muscles develop tone, you can move into heavier weights. It takes some time to start noticing your muscles getting larger due to the fact that the muscle has to be torn down before it can begin building new tissue.

It is a well known fact that not everyone can put on muscle at the same rate. Some guys seem to just get huge chests and huge biceps. Often looking like bodybuilders you see on ESPN. On the other hand, is seems no matter what I do I can't put on weight I tried taking a weight gain supplement but all it did was give me a big belly and then I had to do lots of exercises to work off the extra weight that was not how I planned for it to work out! Some people are not aware of the fact that many of the supplements that there are are not really any good. Some are just some vitamins and proteins that you should get anyway if you eat three meals a day. And, in today's society, there are plenty of people wanting to sell you something, some products go so far as to make big promises.

Using Transitions

Transitions are used in your writing to make it "flow" better. By using them, you avoid the stop-and-go sensation you get when they are not present. Using transitions also shows that you have clearly thought out your writing process and topic; in addition, when you have clearly expressed your ideas, *transitions show your readers how your ideas are connected.*

Anytime a transition appears as the first word in a sentence, it must be followed by a comma; at the end of a sentence, it must have a comma preceding it. However, when a transition is used anywhere else in a sentence, it must have punctuation *before and after* it.

However, the class was already full and I couldn't enroll.
The class, **however,** was already full and I couldn't enroll.
The class was, **however,** already full and I couldn't enroll.
The class was already full, **however,** and I couldn't enroll.
The class was already full and I couldn't enroll, **however.**

Notice also how different content requires different transitions.

The teacher worked her way through college. **Consequently,** she was very conservative with her money.

The teacher worked her way through college. **Therefore,** she had to give up many social activities.

The teacher worked her way through college. **Likewise,** her brother also had a job while he was in school.

The teacher worked her way through college. **However,** she never had a full-time job until after graduation.

The teacher worked her way through college. **Specifically,** she worked as a waitress, a cashier, and as a tutor.

The teacher worked her way through college. **At the same time,** she was enrolled in fifteen credit hours.

Commonly Used Transitions

Indicating Result:	apparently, consequently, for this (that) reason, accordingly, therefore, thus, hence
Indicating Purpose:	for this purpose, in order to do this, to this end, with this in mind, with this in view
Indicating Place:	beyond, here, nearby, opposite, there, to the left (right)
Indicating Concession:	at any rate, at least
Indicating Examples:	for example, for instance, to illustrate
Indicating Emphasis:	above all, certainly, indeed, in fact, in short, in truth, really, obviously, of course
Indicating End:	in conclusion, on the whole, to summarize
Indicating Similarity:	likewise, similarly
Indicating Addition:	again, also, besides, equally important, finally, first, second, etc., further, furthermore, in addition, in the first place, moreover, next, then, too
Indicating Details	especially, to enumerate, in particular, namely, specifically
Indicating Contrast:	however, in contrast, in spite of, nevertheless, notwithstanding, on the contrary, on the other hand, still
Indicating Time:	afterward, earlier, at the same time, in the meantime, later, meanwhile, simultaneously, soon, then

Adding Transitions to Your Writing

The following paragraphs need editing. Add transitions to make the them more "readable." There may be more than one way to add transitions here, so use your best judgment.

When I first went back to college, I was afraid that I might not succeed. I had just been laid off and was not working. I thought I was smart enough. But school scared me. The idea of writing essays and reading and studying all the time was intimidating. I was also afraid that I would not fit in with the rest of the students. When I first began taking classes, I discovered that there were lots of people my age who were also unemployed and going back to school after several years of working steady. This made me feel more comfortable. I still had all those essay tests and all that reading to think about. I later learned that there was not so much to be afraid of. I made my "eight hour day" consist of reading and writing. I also used my "work time" to complete assignments which I could complete in the student union while drinking coffee. My teachers gave me a lot of help and encouragement. They said that I could succeed if I put my mind to it. School was not so scary after all. I began to believe that I could succeed.

When the first trimester was over, I had all A's and B's. I thought there was some luck involved. My teachers said it was because I worked hard. I didn't really believe them and thought maybe they felt sorry for me or something like that. Talking to other students made me believe that they did not feel sorry for me. They said that if I got good grades it was because I did the kind of work the teachers expected. I was relieved. My advisor helped me pre-enroll for the following semester and assured me that I could do equally well and prove there was no luck involved. I enrolled in fifteen hours, went and bought my books for the courses I was taking and decided that maybe I could do this. The next semester was not over yet, so I decided I should not become over-confident in my abilities.

MEMO

To: All employees
From: I.M. Ditz. Quality Control Supervisor IMD
Date: June 1, 1998
Subject: Pipe code specifications

Because of confusion in the quality of pipe used in fabricating heater-treaters and separators we build for the oilfield industry and refineries, the following standards are now in effect. Please read this carefully and make sure all materials meet the following specifications:

- All pipe is to be made of a long hole, surrounded by metal centered around the hole.
- All pipe is to be hollow throughout the entire length.
- All acid-proof pipe is to be made of acid proof metal.
- O.D. of all pipe must exceed the I.D. Otherwise, the hole will be on the outside of the pipe.
- All pipe is to be supplied with nothing in the hole so that water, steam, or other stuff can be put inside at a later date.
- All pipe is to be supplied without rust, as this can be more readily put on at the jobsite.
- All pipe is to be cleaned free of any covering such as mud, tar, barnacles, or any other form of manure before painting. Otherwise, it will make lumps under the paint.
- All pipe over 6" in diameter is to have the words "Large Pipe" painted on it so that the fitter will not use it for small pipe.
- All pipe over 500' in length must have the words "Long Pipe" clearly painted on each end so the fitter will not have to walk the full length to determine if it is a long pipe or not.

Any variations or exceptions to these specifications should be called to the attention of the nearest Quality Control Supervisor immediately.

Editing Your Writing

The final step in the writing process is usually editing. Spelling is a concern--one which writers must be responsible for since computer spell-check programs cannot find certain errors. As a result, three exercises for correcting commonly confused words which are spelled correctly are presented. Also included are two exercises for eliminating wordiness and one exercise which tests all editing skills.

Improving Your Speling

Having chosen English as the preferred language in the EEC, the European Parliament commissioned a feasibility study to identify potential improvements in communications between government departments. European officials have often pointed out that English spelling is unnecessarily difficult--for example, cough, plough, rough, through, and thorough. What is clearly needed is a phased program of changes to iron out these anomalies. The program would, of course, be administered by a committee of top-level staff from participating nations.

In the first year, for example, the committee would suggest using "s" instead of the soft "c." Sertainly, sivil servants in all sities would resieve this news with joy. Then the hard "c" could be replased by "k" sinse both letters are pronounced alike. Not only would this klear up konfusion in the minds of klerikal workers, but typewriters kould be made with one less letter.

There would be growing enthusiasm when, in the sekond year, it kould be announsed that the troublesome "ph" would henseforth be written "f." This would make words like "fotograf" twenty persent shorter in print. In the third year, publik akseptanse of the new spelling kan be expekted to reash the stage where more komplikated shanges are possible. Governments would enkourage the removal of double letters, which have always been a deterent to akurate speling.

We would al agre that the horible mes of silent "e" in the language is disgrasful. Therefor we kould drop thes and kontinu to read and writ as though nothing had hapend. By this tim it would be four years sins the skem began and people would be reseptiv to steps sutsh as replasing "th" by "z." Perhaps zen ze funktion of "w" kould be taken on by "v," vitsh is, after al, half a "w." Shortly after zis, ze unesesary "o" kould be dropd from words kontaining "ou." Similar arguments vud of kors be aplid to ozer kombinations of leters.

Kontinuing zis proses yer after yer, ve vud eventuli hav a reli sensible ritenstyl. After tventi yers zer vud be no mor trubls or difikultis and evrivun vud fin it ezi tu understand ech ozer. Ze drems of ze guvermnt vud finali hav kum tru.

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Correcting Spelling Errors

Read the following paragraphs and edit for spelling errors.

What is a Bussiness Plan?

If you were too consider starting your own bussiness, an advisor might telll you to begin by prepaing a business plan. This plane would present yur basic business ideea and alll related operateing, marketing, finnancial, and managirial considerashuns. In a sinse, it would represent your game plan. It would crystallize the dreems and hops that provid your motivation. Whatever the name, it shouild lay out your idea, describe where you are, and point out were you want too go and who you peropose to get theire.

The business plian may pressent a proposal for lunching an entirely new business. More commmonly, perhaps, it may presents a plan for a major expanskion of a firm that has allready started operation. For example, an entrupreneur may open a small local busness and see the possibillity of opening additional branch's or extending itws success in other ways. Th plan may also be a respond to some change in the externil envirment (government, demographic, industry, etc.) that may lead to new opportunnities.

How to Stat a Paperback Boook Collection

Many maiil-order dealers speciallize in vintage paperbacks and issue catalgs perriodically. Their is often a charge for these catalogs, but at th curent time this is the way too get the widest selection of books. Collectors should compar catalogs, the more the better, to obtaine the best best value. Greant differences in price can exists between catalogs. This often happen when one catalog comes from a part-timme dealer who sells only locally obrtained items and the other catalog is from a dealer who works full time, traveling to sales as well as buying through the mail. The farmer has a lower overhead and offers a smaller selection at cheeper prices. The later generally charges mre but has a wider variety of items

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Biased Language

The current workforce, in many areas, contains as many women as men. In order to treat *all people* fairly, biased language should be avoided. Shown below are examples of biased language, followed by a corrected version.

Last Tuesday, sisters struck another blow against male supremacy when eighty women employees paralyzed the pin-striped world of solidly entrenched sexism for more than six hours. The timely and articulate protest was aimed against degrading working conditions, unfair salary scales, and lack of promotional opportunities. Stunned executives watched helplessly as the group occupied their offices. The women were determined to continue their occupation until their demands for equal rights were met. Embarrassed company officials soon perceived the magnitude of this protest action and agreed to study the group's demands and to revise the company's discriminatory policies. The success of this long overdue confrontation serves as an inspiration to oppressed women employees everywhere.

Our Omaha branch was the scene of an amusing battle of the sexes last Tuesday, when a Women's Lib group, eighty strong, staged a six-hour sit-in at the company's executive offices. The protest was lodged against alleged inequities in hiring, wages, working conditions, and promotion for women in our company. The radicals threatened to remain in the building until their demands were met. Bemused company officials responded to this carnival display with patience and dignity, assuring the militants that their claims and demands--however inaccurate and immoderate--would receive just consideration.

At 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, January 21, eighty women employees entered the executive offices of our Omaha branch and remained six hours, bringing business to a virtual halt. The group issued a formal statement of protest, claiming their working conditions were repressive, their salary scale was unfair, and their promotional opportunities were limited. The women demanded affirmative action, insisting that the company's hiring and promotional policies and wage scales be revised. The demonstration ended when Garvin Tate, vice president in charge of personnel, promised to appoint a committee to investigate the group's claims and to correct any inequities.

Source: *Technical Writing,* sixth edition, by John M. Lannon, Harper-Collins, 1994.

Assignment:
Analyze the previous paragraphs and write a short report, 1 to 1 1/2 pages, in memo format, discussing the following items:

- Attitude, or tone, of each paragraph
- Sex of the writer--and how you determined that
- Specific examples of biased language--and what they say about the writer

Avoiding Sexist Language

An issue raised over the past several years is how writers in the workplace discuss and write about other people. For years and years, it was acceptable to use "he" when referring to people in general. That is no longer acceptable. The rise of the female worker has prompted a change in the way we write about others and use descriptive language. While to some it may seem insignificant or bothersome, it is an issue which should not be overlooked! Look at the examples below and work at incorportating them into your everyday writing.

Avoid using *man* when referring to members of both sexes

Words and phrases such as *mankind, man-made materials, mankind's scientific achievements, businessman, policeman, fireman, mailman.*

Instead, use *humanity, synthetic, scientific achievements, businessperson, police officer, firefighter, mail carrier.*

Sexist	**Neutral**
chairman	chair person
craftsman	skilled worker
foreman	supervisor
landlord, landlady	owner
manpower	strength, power
man to man	candidly
men	human beings, people
stewardess	flight attendant
woman's intuition	intuition
workman	worker

Avoid using masculine pronouns (*he, his, him*) when referring to a group which includes both men and women.

An employee should always be sure to put *his* tools away properly to avoid damage.

Revise by making pronouns *plural.*

Employees should always put *their* tools away properly to avoid damage

Each person should make sure *he* fills in all the blank spaces on *his* time sheet.

Revise by eliminating the pronouns.

Each person should fill in all blank spaces on the time sheet.

Avoid using sexist greetings in letters

Dear Sir, Gentlemen, Dear Madam

Because men's and women's names are sometimes interchangeable (Bobby, Bobbie, Pat, Francis, Frances, etc) it would be a mistake to address someone as "Sir" when, in fact, they may be female!

Use the full name and avoid the gender reference.

Dear Pat Sullivan, Dear Francis Baker

Use title or position if the name is unknown.

Dear Personnel Manager, Attention: Scholarship Committee

Avoid overuse of *his or her, him/her, his/her.*

Occasionally, writers get carried away and use one of the above combinations every time they need to use a pronoun. Overuse becomes awkward to read and detracts from the message.

Avoid associating certain professions with a particular gender.

A doctor should make certain *his* patient is comfortable with the situation before *he* recommends surgery.

A nurse should always consult the doctor before *she* administers any new medications.

An elementary school teacher must constantly nurture *her* students.

Revise by using plurals.

Doctors should make certain *their* patients. . . . . before *they*. . . .

Nurses . . . . . before *they*. . . .

Elementary school teachers must constantly nurture *their* students.

Wordiness

Some writers believe that the more big words they use, the better their writing is--nothing could be further from the truth. Using "seventy-five dollar words" does not make you a better writer. Sometimes, people are just plain turned off by language they cannot understand. Whether or not the words are overly long or jargon (specialized terms) may not matter. ***You must write so others can understand you!*** Look at the examples below and see if you can figure out what the writer is saying.

Pretentious Language

Vexed as a bedewed female poultry specimen.

A plethora of individuals with experience and expertise in culinary technique vitiate the potable concoction produced by steeping certain comestibles.

Male cadavers are incapable of yielding testimony

Neophyte's serendipity

Where there are visible vapors having their prevalence in ignited carbonaceous materials, there is conflagaration.

The temperature of the aqueous content of an unremittingly ogled saucepan does not reach 212 degrees Farenheit.

Sentence Structure

Sentence structure can also be confusing and intimidating:

The many countries incorporated into the Ottoman Empire, living within its system of bureaucratic control and under the jurisdiction of a single law, formed a vast trading area, in which persons and goods could move in relative safety, along trade-routes maintained by imperial forces and provided with *khans*, and without paying customs duties, although various local dues had to be paid. (one sentence!)

Eliminating unnecessary words

Look at the list below and see if you recognize the empty phrases which often precede the information you're trying to get across:

Each and every time.	At one point in time. . . . .
Due to the fact that.	He is a man who. . . .
To the best of my recollection.	Aware of the fact that. . . . .
In today's society.	The purpose of this report is to. . . . .

***There is, there are, it is, it was, there were*---all these should be avoided, too.**

There are seven students in this class who regularly come to class late
Seven students regularly come to class late.

There is a group of teachers who believe that all students are lazy.
Some teachers believe that all students are lazy.

It is a well known fact that black cats cause bad luck.
Black cats cause bad luck.

Nominalizations

Nominalizations are verbs converted into nouns and adjectives. They usually end with *-ion, -ity, -ment, -ness, -ance.*

We should make an assessment of . . .	We should assess. . . .
She reached the conclusion that. . . .	She concluded. . . .
There was an assurance that. . . .	We were assured. . . .
Please make a contribution to. . . .	Please contribute to. . . .

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Specialized Language

Using specialized terms of a particular field of study may be necessary in some cases. However, remember that it can be very annoying and confusing if readers are unfamiliar with the subject matter you're discussing. Read the examples below and see if you *really understand* what's being discussed.

> Hypothesis testing is a possible explanation for language acquisition only if it is recognized that the child's hypotheses are limited in number and that the environment contributes triggering rather than negative evidence.

> On three occasions cyclists completed, as fast as possible, two exercise tasks (T1 and T2) separated by a 30 min rest. T1 and T2 were equivalent to the work performed during 2 hours cycling at 75%VO2max and 30 min at 75%VO2max, respectively.

> To evaluate a possible link between NaK-ATPase activity and resistance to the hypnotic effect of ethanol, we examined inbred strains of mice with shorter (C57BL/6J) and longer (DBA/2J) ethanol sleep times.

> The effects of supplementation of dietary clofibric acid (.5% wt/wt) on fatty acid binding protein (FABP) activity, apparent lipid digestibility, and serum cholesterol concentrations were evaluated in weanling pigs.

Since specialized terms and vocabulary can often confuse readers, remember to define abbreviations or try to avoid using them as little as possible if there's a chance you may confuse your reader.

Create Your Own List

On the lines below, make a list of terms from your program or major which may confuse readers who are not familiar with that particular discipline.

Commonly Confused Words

When you write, you must be careful to use the correct word. If you do not, people may misunderstand what you or saying. Look at the following list and note that many of this words will not be noticed by the spell-check function on a commuter. Make a metal note of those words and try to use them correctly in you're writing.

a, an
angle, angel
adapt, adopt, adept
ally, alley
assent, ascent, accent
board, bored
by, buy
censor, censure, sensor, censer
clothes, cloths
council, counsel
do, due
currant, current
device, devise
elude, allude
farther, further
fourth, forth
gorilla, guerrilla
heard, herd
hole, whole
incite, insight
know, no, now
loose, lose
moral, morale
passed, past
pedal, peddle
perspective, prospective
perform, preform
proceed, precede
quiet, quite
right, write, rite
sense, since, cents
suit, suite
two, to, too
very, vary
wear, ware
which, witch
you're, your

aisle, isle
access, excess
advise, advice
all ready, already
bare, bear
breath, breathe
capital, capitol
cite, sight, site
coarse, course
custom, costume
dual, duel
decent, descent
die, dye
envelop, envelope
feel, fill
flair, flare
have, of
heroin, heroine
hysterical, historical
it's, its
later, latter
manner, manor
naval, navel
piece, peace
personal, personnel
plain, plane
presents, presence
prophecy, prophesy
raise, raze
road, rode
shown, shone
than, then
their, there, they're
waist, waste
were, where, we're
who's, whose
ensure, insure

altar, alter
accept, except
affect, effect
are, or, our
berth, birth
brake, break
casual, causal
choose, chose
complement, compliment
dairy, diary
conscious, conscience
dessert, desert
does, dose
fair, fare
formally, formerly
forward, foreword
hear, here
hoarse, horse
illusion, allusion
knew, new
led, lead
meat, meet
pair, pare, pear
patients, patience
persecute, prosecute
pray, prey
principle, principal
prosperity, posterity
rain, rein, reign
scene, seen
sole, soul
track, tract
threw, through
weak, week
weather, whether, wether
woman, women
baron, barren

Editing Exercise:

Edit the following paragraphs. Circle the errors and write in the correct word.

When my sister enrolled at OSU-Okmulgee, she knew that going to school their would be quite different from high school. She had taken her ACT tests in the spring and had done quite well. Her scores were higher then most of her friends'; however, our older brother had come to school here also and hadn't past the Basic Composition coarse. When that happened, it was a big blow to his moral. Failing the class had a big affect on him and he began to study a lot more--even on weekends. Eventually, his grades got better. He went to see a tutor at the Library and even used the grammar checker in the Skills Center. After retaking the course, he new that he would do better the following semester

The moral of the personnel where I work is excellent. The employees take a personnel interest in they're work and there jobs. As a result, most of the people I work with are happy to be here. No matter what's going on or whose on the job, the work always gets done. Are supervisor is quiet efficient and always helps us get threw the difficult parts of the day when were so busy. In addition to being content with are jobs, the company allows us to invest in they're profit sharing plan. We're quite confident that we will not loose our money if the stock market goes down. All ready this year, we've made a 7% return on our investment. Their is no question that this is the write job for me.

On my way to work, a 18-wheeler went flying by me. As he did, a peace of gravel flew up and hit my windshield. I slammed on my breaks, but then realized they're was no emergency. The gravel just made a little crack on the side of the windshield. Its really not noticeable. When I finally got to work, I parked were I usually do. There were not to many people there because several people had the flu. Looking closer at my windshield, I noticed that their were two other cracks that I had not noticed. In fact, the very corner of my windshield had a loose peace that was almost ready to fall out. If it dose, I will have to get it fixed before winter.

Editing Exercise:

Edit the following paragraphs. Circle the errors and write in the correct word.

When I first enrolled at OSU-Okmulgee, I didn't now what kind of classes to take. One of my friends had gone threw the Air Conditioning program and really liked it. But, my new roommate in the dorm said that Auto Body was better because the coarses were a lot more fun and you cold work on you're own car or truck in classes. After taking General Education courses for one semester, I decided that I'd better get busy and chose a major because I didn't want to take any more Gen Ed courses! Finely, one of my teachers gave me some advise which made some since. He told me that I should of thought this out before I got here. But sense I didn't I should just follow my instincts and due what I felt like. He said I could all ways retrain for another field if it turned out I didn't like what I was doing in tin years.

Now its my forth semester and I'm enrolled in Shoe, Boot, and Saddle. My parents didn't want to here that because they thought I should get a high-tech kind of job. My dad said they're were to many people out there now making boots and saddles. In addition, he said I should of thought things out a lot more. After he called me stubborn for doing this, I told him not to take it personnel. Doing what I want is good for my moral, and I enjoy the work. The work is also good for a person's piece of mind--working with your hands is very satisfying.

Some of the people in the program with me or older people. One guy is older then my dad. That sort of surprises me. I thought when a person got that old they couldn't learn anything. Boy, was I wrong. The work this guy dose is really excellent and he's always behind because he spends lots of time making sure things are write. He always gets lots of complements on his work and it's usually the fanciest stuff in the shop. You never know weather its for him or someone ordered it. His skills are way past most of the other students and he's all ready had two job offers from boot and saddlemakers in Colorado. All in all, I'm glad I chose this major because I've met a lot of neat people who feel like me--high tech isn't everything its cracked up to be. Sometimes, you need too get back too the basics!

Editing Exercise:

Edit the following paragraphs. Circle the errors and write in the correct word.

When I first got out of high school, I thought that I would never half too write anything again. I thought that I had a education, but I later discovered I was just beginning. When I enrolled in Comp I, the teacher said that we would due lots of writing. She was write about that! We had a essay do about every three weeks and lots of other stuff in between. I fill that I was doing a pretty good job, but I had a D at midterm. My parents where quiet upset about that. I told them not to take it personnel--I was doing the best I cold. They're advise to me was to do better! After midterm, I talked too my teacher in order to see what I could due to improve my grade. She new my grades were not to good, so she gave me some exercises to help me figure out what was wrong with my writing. My principal mistake was comma splices and run-on sentences. When I figured out how to fix those, my grades started getting better. By the time are final assignment was due, my grade was up to a C+. That was probably the hardest coarse I've taken hear at OSU-Okmulgee.

After I past Comp I with a C, my advisor told me that I had to take Tech Writing--another writing coarse! I was upset. I now that it must be some sort of a plan to make students miserable. Otherwise, are teachers would not smile so much when we walk into the classroom. It's really disgusting that I have too take another writing class. But, I here that the course is not to difficult if you don't get behind in you're work. Some of the things I learned in Comp I will work hear--such as revising and editing. Their is a lot of rewriting to due in order to get a passing grade from this teacher. Even if it dose not have a lot of marks on it, you're paper could be a B or C paper. I'll be glad when the summer brake gets here. In fact, I could of skipped going to school this summer and made some money by working for my uncle. But, once I get the hang of this technical writing stuff, I might be able to write much better. Than, maybe, I can get a good office job were I don't half to do to much but sit around, give orders, and write something on my computer once in awhile. That would be nice. It doesn't make a lot of since to work two hard if you don't have too.

Editing Exercise

Revise the following paragraphs and eliminate the wordiness.

The purpose of this proposal is to outline a modified version of Basic Composition (ENGL 1103) which should enhance the writing skills of technical students at OSU-Okmulgee. The sole purpose of the Communications faculty seems to be, in this case, to provide top-notch quality training in technical writing. As part of that training, the Communications faculty need to provide instruction that is relevant, functional, and at least somewhat worthwhile. This relevant and functional training would have a great benefit for the technical students who attend classes here at OSU-Okmulgee.

The reason for the modification of ENGL 1103 is not to replace Technical Writing (ENGL 2333) or otherwise minimize the importance of Freshman Composition I and II. Rather, the changes that are being proposed are designed to further teach students the basics of technical writing, assuming that their program does not require technical writing. For those students whose programs do not require further writing instruction, the proposed class offers instruction in the fundamentals of technical writing which students may need later in their careers as technicians or various sorts as well as managers, supervisors, or potential business owners.

At this point in time, well qualified technicians cannot further advance their technical careers by depending only on mechanical skills. The introduction to basic technical writing skills which they are able to obtain on this campus should be taken into consideration when planning classes for them because the proposed course may be the only contact they have with the aforementioned subject matter. Therefore, what the instructor provides must be relevant and usable. Using subject matter from their disciplines, students will be allowed to take the technical writing subject matter and form a communication using the variety of assignments in the proposed class. All in all, it is a well known fact that students do better writing when it is something that they are interested in. In today's society it does not make sense to do busywork which does not have a purpose.

Editing Exercise

Revise the following paragraphs and eliminate the wordiness.

The purpose of this essay is to make the student aware of issues which have an effect on our everyday lives. In today's society, there are many political issues to consider before voting. For instance, there is the concealed gun law which allows each and every citizen to carry a concealed weapon. At this point in time, I do not believe this is a good idea. With all the drive-by shootings and gang warfare already taking place, who needs more guns on the street? It is a well-known fact that guns do not kill people; people kill people. At least that's true in the majority of cases.

Another important issue to consider before voting is casino gambling. In an in-depth analysis of states with casino gambling, it was found that crimes involving loss of property and loss of life were higher. Before voters approve casino gambling, they should be aware of the fact that gambling also brings other types of crime to the area. For example, prostitution seems to flourish around most casinos in Nevada and Atlantic City. Although it is a supposedly "victimless" crime, it is still a crime in most places. Although the intention is to bring some sort of business to the state and, in addition, bring in more tax money to the state treasury, voters are in need of a better explanation of just how all this money will be collected and spent by the state government in the capital.

A final issue to consider when making a determination about how to vote is the number of toll roads in the state. I mean, just how many of these things do we need? Before someone votes for a new toll road, they should read the results of the follow-up investigation made by the Against More Toll Roads group (AMTR). They studied all the current toll roads in the state and reached a conclusion that may surprise voters. They discovered that most of the roads were paid for years ago and the Department of Transportation, in reality, has a surplus of money in their treasury to take care of the roads. Hey, I mean, get a life, voters! Be aware of what's going on around you.

Editing Exercise

Find as many errors as possible. You may find any kind of errors--spelling, confused words, typos, format, subject-verb agreement, wordy sentences, fragments, comma splices, and run-ons.

INTRODUCTION

This short test is designed too see if you can spot many of teh diffrunt kinds of errors we have studied this emester. When you begin, look at the obvious kinds of errors that most poeple notice. For instance, does things "look right," or does something look a little "funny?" By this time of the semester you should be able to spot alot of errors for instance can you see some of the commonly confused words like we did in the handout these are the words that are spelled differently but sound alike.

Not knowing the difference between these words can cause readers to misunderstand what you or saying, these kinds of mistakes are easy to forget to look for because spell-check won't catch them. Another kind of error you might check for is comma splices, these are sentences that are joined by a comma. Also fragments and runons. These can be a real problem if you let them get out of hand.

DISCUSSION

Errors you make in you're writing could cause someone to judge you unfairly. For instance, if you were applying for a job and had a messy letter of application and resume, the person who could hire you might think your not a good worker. However, you might be the bset mechanic there is and you would not get the job because you didn't do to well with your writing. Just think of all the people and all the jobs they could of had. If they had taken more time to write a decent letter and resume.

When I and my wife first come to OSU-Okmulgee, we both thought we was pretty good at writing and we were. But now that I know how many things can go wrong thanks to my teacher He showed me alot of things that can make me a even better writer than what I am. I'm

alot more careful about checking my writing before I hand it in too my teacher. My grades are better then they used to be they could still be better. At least my writing is better. I even got a A on a psychology assignment that I had to write up about dying.

However, in one of my construction technology classes, a representative from a company that was hiring talked to us about communication skills he said that tehy are very inportant to new employees so they will know what to do and know what is expected of them. This is the same thing our teacher had been telling us, but I didn't believe him until I heard this other guy speak it was quite interesting.

Conclusion

Basically, what I'm trying to say is that due to the fact that I'm such a good writer, I really didn't learn much. But, writing can be important if you plan to go to work for a business. They might want you to write report or describe a accident that happened. You can never tell what someone might want you to do therefore you should learn as much as possible while you are still in school because it might be usefull later on in your career. One of my friends had went to see about taking tech writing but I told him it was a waste of time if you can write a letter you dont need to know to much else that will be enough to get you buy in life.

Now that I am about to graduate, I fill that my communication skills (speech and writing) are very inportant. I'm glad I took a speech class hear at OSU-Okmulgee, however I am still not so sure about the writing class. It was alot of work and the teacher was boring and made us write alot of stupid assignments. I don't know why because I am already a good writer and there is not to much I can inprove oh well some times you have to do things in life you dont want too due thats what my dad always told me. Anyway I guess I learned a little in this class. My grades were ok at midterm so I expect I'll get through it.

DILBERT

HEY! THAT LITTLE STUFFED DOLL LOOKS JUST LIKE ME!
IT GIVES ME AN EMOTIONAL LIFT TO HAVE YOUR LIKENESS NEARBY.
I NEVER REALIZED WHAT HE THOUGHT OF ME.
STOP DROPPING IN LIKE THAT!!
WHACK!
S Adams E-mail: SCOTTADAMS@AOL.COM
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Writing Assignments

Letter of Complaint

Whenever something goes wrong--especially with something you have just purchased and paid for, it's tempting to go screaming and cursing back into the place of business where you bought it and let them know just how you feel! However, this is rarely effective and usually just makes the store owner or businessman decide that he would never help you again if you begged for help!

The best way to let your complaints be known--especially if very much money is involved--is by writing a letter. Not only does this give the business person a better idea of what's gone wrong, but it also gives them a record of an error that they may not want to make again. If your letter does not bring about the desired action, your copy of the letter also gives you something to take to an attorney. Records of correspondence are better evidence of your trying to work out the problem than conversations (which are hard to document).

Several things should be kept in mind when writing a complaint letter:

- Identify the transaction, with references to contracts, invoices, dates, account numbers, and so on. Receipts are also important.
- Describe any product or service you mention, especially the model or serial number.
- Explain clearly and simply what is wrong
- Explain what you want the reader to do in order to satisfy you, and explain why you believe your complaint is justified.
- Give your name, address, and telephone number where you can be reached during the day.

Several things should also be avoided:

- Sarcasm--being sarcastic only angers the person you are trying to deal with. This may give them an "I'll show him attitude" which will delay or ruin your chances at getting something fixed, exchanged, or taken care of.
- Threats--idle threats really anger people. If you threaten to take someone to court or make them "sorry you ever saw me," that will work against you.
- Inflammatory language--words like "sorry service," "cheap product," "lazy bunch of slobs you call employees," etc. only attacks the person, not the problem.

Guidelines

First paragraph:
The opening paragraph should identify what you bought (include dates, model numbers, store location if there are several, how much you paid for the product or service, and who was involved (e.g., sales clerks, mechanics, hairdressers, etc.).

Second paragraph:
Explain clearly what is wrong. In this paragraph, you should explain what was expected from the product or service. For example, if you bought new "heads" from the J.C. Whitney catalog to put in your old truck, you expect them to be ready. However, when they arrived, you realized they had been improperly milled. At this point you might also state what effect this will have on your rebuilt motor.

Third paragraph:
Explain clearly what action you want the supplier, businessman to take. For instance, you want to exchange the faulty product, receive a full refund, or want missing parts which may not have been included in the purchase. Be very clear about what you want so the person you're doing business with can understand what is expected of them.

Fourth paragraph:
Tell the people you're dealing with where you can be reached during the day. You should also give them your home number so they can reach you at home, too. That way, if they miss you at work, they can call you at home.

Your complaint letter should be typewritten. Not only are typewritten letters easier to read, but they also look more "official" and have more impact on the reader than one which is hastily handwritten.

Assignment:

Write a letter to a company--real or fictional--in which you complain about a service or product you have purchased. You should clearly state the problem, mention specific details (date of purchase, amount, model number, etc.), and clearly state what action you want the seller/businessperson to take in response to your letter.

Remember that you are trying to get someone to help you. Pay close attention to the tone of your letter. Making someone angry will only decrease your chances of receiving a suitable response to your letter.

Due date:_____

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1801 E. 4th
Okmulgee, OK 74447
January 29, 1995

[The amount of space here can vary--depending on how long your letter is.]

Robert Smith, Manager
Wally World Discount Center
7309 S. Broadway
Oklahoma City, OK 00000

Dear Mr. Smith:

Single spaced paragraph_____[what you bought and who was involved]_____
_____
_____

[double space]

Single spaced paragraph_____
_____
_____[explain what is wrong and what was expected; include
_____model numbers, etc.] _____
_____
_____
_____

[double space]

Single spaced paragraph_____
_____[explain what action you expect the business to take in
_____order to correct the problem_____
_____
_____

[double space]

Single spaced paragraph_____
_____[state where you can be reached night and day]_____
_____

[double space]

Sincerely,

[three blank lines]

Jane Doe

1203 S. Whitetail Lane
Okmulgee, OK 74447
November 29, 1994

Billy Bob Redneck, Manager
Redneck Hunting & Fishing Supply
P.O. Box 847
Stillwater, OK 74074

Dear Billy Bob,

I've got a complaint about something your stupid employees sold me last week. When I was in there last week, I was looking for a double barrel .410 shotgun. Your "employees" were so busy watching college girls walk down the street that they hardly had time to wait on me. That really ticked me off. You had the gun I was looking for and when I finally got somebody's @#$%& attention, I was able to inspect the gun I wanted.

Then, your employees all went on break and seemed to disappear. I guess they went to Eskimo Joe's for lunch because when they came back they all had beer on their breath. I don't think that's very *&%$# professional. When I finally decided to buy the gun, those lazy, no-good *&%$^# employees of yours couldn't find a case for it.

They took the gun to the back and carried it back to me in a new case. Imagine my surprise when I got home here in Okmulgee and discovered they'd slipped me a Daisy Red Ryder BB gun! This is dishonesty of the lowest kind and I'm going to haul your *&%$#@ rear-end into court for this!

I think you and your employees are @$%#&* snakes in the grass. As far as I'm concerned, you can take your store and *&%$#*!@. You can also go *&#$@ you low-life @#$*&

Jimmy Ray

Letter of Application and Resume

Assignment:

Write a letter of application for a job you might reasonably expect to get. Assume that a specific opening exists and that your reader knows little or nothing about you until reading your letter. Follow basic business letter format (see the following page). If you need to, you may modify the order of information included in each paragraph.

Prepare a resume to include with your letter. On the following pages are the guidelines you should use for choosing which information to include. Remember that the purpose of the letter of application ("cover letter") and resume is *to get you an interview*. Keep that purpose in mind while writing.

Due date:_____

Use the space below to make notes about the information you want to include in your letter and resume.

1234 Elm Street
Slapout, OK 00000
June 17, 1997

John Doe, Manager
ABC Computer Company
1907 W. Broadway
Slick, OK 00000

Dear Mr. Doe:

The first paragraph should clearly state your reason for writing and identify the position you are applying for. You may also want to mention how you learned about the job and state why you are interested in this particular position or company.

The second paragraph should state why you believe you are competent and should be given the job you are applying for. Identify your qualifications briefly, mention your degree from OSU-Okmulgee, and the date you graduated (or will graduate). You may also want to mention other activities such as club leadership positions, internships, or academic honors.

Following your academic qualifications should be an accounting of relevant work experience. This can include skills you already have, extra training (vo-tech, military, other schools), seminars, professional certifications, etc. Include specific details about how your work experience has prepared you for the job you're applying for.

The final paragraph needs to restate your competence and confidence you have in yourself (remember that you're selling yourself as the best person to fill a position). The main thing, however, is to be sure and request an interview. Following that, identify how and when you can be reached. Include all relevant forms of communication--e-mail address, answering machine, fax number, pager number, etc. Make it easy for your potential employer to get in touch with you. Finally, thank the employer for taking the time to read your resume and letter.

Sincerely,

John Q. Student

enclosure: resume

Resume Guidelines

General Information

Resumes have only one purpose--to get you an interview.

You should tailor your resume to a specific job or organization by including information relevant to the job you are applying for.

Two general types of resumes exist:

- Chronological--a record listing work and education--*from present to past*
- Analytical--a record presenting your skills and qualifications

To create the physical form and appearance of your resume:

- Use headings, underlining, boldface type, or capital letters.
- Use wide margins (one inch minimum).
- Keep it to one page unless content warrants two.
- Balance text on page.
- Don't put any information in upper left-hand corner where people staple or paper clip.
- Use standard size paper (colors may vary: off-white, light gray, ivory).

Sloppily written resumes reflect a sloppy attitude!

A resume that is easier to read *will* get read.

Using Fragments in Resume Writing

When writing your resume, fragments are acceptable in all sections. Remember that you're working with limited space and want to say as much as possible in a compact space.

OBJECTIVE: To obtain an entry-level position as a residential HVAC technician.

EMPLOYMENT: Calculated material costs for bid sheets
Surveyed job sites and flagged excavation sites
Supervised crew of four employees

Resume Contents

Name, address(es), telephone number(s) with area codes, e-mail address. Include both permanent and temporary addresses and telephone numbers.

Career/job objective if you can be specific about positions and goals

Education (list most recent first, reverse chronological order

- Name of school (no abbreviations), city and state
- Dates--years only, or month/year of *expected* graduation
- Degree--type and area of concentration, program
- Relevant coursework
- No high school !

Qualifications and Experience

- Chronological format
  Employer--name of organization, city and state
  Title of job held
  Dates of employment
  Significant experience and duties in that job

- Analytical (skills-based) format
  Categories of skills and experiences
  Reverse chronological list of jobs held

Additional Information--if important to the job you are seeking

- Language capabilities
- Travel
- Computer skills
- Publications
- Interests to show you aren't a bookworm

Information Not to Include!

- Height, weight, age, marital status, gender, creed, health
- High school accomplishments
- Photograph
- Salary requirements
- Grade point average (unless it is 4.0 or very close)
- Hobbies and interests. Select only those that show leadership or something positive (such as volunteer work), or information directly related to the job you are seeking.

Resume Contents (continued)

When listing skills on your resume, use active, descriptive words. Listed below are examples. Some skills and categories may overlap--use them as you see fit and as they fit your particular situation.

Management/Leadership Skills
Planned
Organized
Scheduled
Directed
Managed
Negotiated

Maintenance Skills
Repaired
Maintained
Operated
Dismantled
Adjusted
Overhauled

Clerical Skills
Filed
Recorded
Performed data entry
Contacted (customers, clients)
Typed (memos, letters, reports)
Assisted (managers, supervisors)

Communication Skills
Wrote reports
Delivered presentations
Interviewed
Answered telephones
Reviewed information
Researched and reported

Technical Skills
Calibrated
Built/Constructed
Surveyed
Aligned
Calculated
Diagnosed

Public Relations Skills
Wrote (news releases)
Conducted (meetings)
Maintained (client connections)
Represented (the company)
Consulted (with clients)
Informed employees (of policies)

Mary Q. Student
2323 W. Elm
Okmulgee, OK 74447
(918) 756-0000
e-mail: mqs@aol.com

OBJECTIVE

This section allows you to specify the position you are applying for. It should be specific, if possible.

EDUCATION

1997 — **Oklahoma State University-Okmulgee,** Okmulgee, OK
Associate of Applied Science, Culinary Arts, August 1997
Expected graduation date: August 1997
Graduate Performance Guarantee

1995 — **Red River Vo-Tech,** Duncan, OK
Certificate in Food Services Management, May 1995

EMPLOYMENT

1993-1995 — **Doughboy's Pizza and Subs,** Duncan, OK
Prepared cold sandwiches for delivery
Mixed and prepared salads for delivery
Accounted for daily receipts of delivery drivers

1991-1993 — **El Palacio,** Duncan, OK
Served as hostess and cashier for evening and weekend shifts
Waited tables on an as-needed basis
Accepted telephone reservations for banquets and catered dinners

1990-1991 — **Sonic Drive-In,** Duncan, OK
Worked as carhop
Prepared occasional grill orders and telephone orders

ACHIEVEMENTS

1996-1997 — **Secretary-Treasurer**, Junior Chefs Association
Oklahoma State University-Okmulgee chapter

1996 — **First place,** Oklahoma Hotel and Restaurant Association's Eastern Oklahoma Ice Carving Expo, Talılequah, OK

REFERENCES — **Furnished upon request**

James Q. Student

Campus Address:
1801 E. 4th
P.O. Box 2345
Okmulgee, OK 74447
(918) 000-0000

Permanent Address
Route 1, Box 79
Slapout, OK 00000
(405) 000-0000

OBJECTIVE

This section allows you to specify the position you are applying for. It should be specific, if possible.

EDUCATION

Oklahoma State University-Okmulgee, Okmulgee, OK
Diesel and Heavy Equipment Technology
Expected graduation date: August 1997
Graduate Performance Guarantee

Relevant coursework:

Fuel Delivery Systems	Brakes and Suspension
Transmissions	Hydraulics
Air Delivery and Exhaust	Electrical Systems

EMPLOYMENT

Performed minor repairs on Caterpillar Diesel engines
Serviced and maintained company's tow trucks and wreckers
Mobile Diesel Repair, Tulsa, OK. Summer 1996

Performed routine maintenance on stationary diesel engines
Served as apprentice mechanic on major engine overhauls
Smokey's Repair Shop, Morris, OK. Summer 1995

Operated and maintained wheat harvesting equipment
Jack Frost Custom Combining, Pocasset, OK. Summer 1994

OTHER SKILLS

Computer literate
Word for Windows 6.0
Microsoft Excel
Lotus 1-2-3
MacDraw

ACTIVITIES

Eagle Scout, Boy Scout Troop 459, Pocasset, OK
Big Brother volunteer, 1995-1996

REFERENCES

Furnished upon request

INTERNSHIP REPORT

Student's Name

Name of Program

OSU-Okmulgee

Month Day, Year

Name of Dealership

Branch (if applicable)

City, State

Internship Report

If your program requires an internship report, you may use the following guidelines to prepare a ***detailed analysis*** of your work with the dealership or business you are working for. Include the following items and ***organize your report using the following topic headings:***

- **Introduction**
  Trimester you're enrolled in
  Name of dealership you're working for
  And branch, if it has more than one location
  Number of branches dealership has (if applicable)
  List the specialties (farm equipment, trucking, road-building equipment, etc.)
  If your shop does outside work for other dealerships mention what kind
  Approximate number of employees where you work

- **Overview of Program Organization**
  How does your dealership deal with interns?
  How are they supervised?
  Who did you work with?
  Was it a positive experience?

- **Analysis of Tasks and Assignments**
  What kinds of jobs or responsibilities were you given?
  Were you able to competently complete the jobs you were given?
  Did they meet your expectations?
  Were they above or below your skill level? Explain.
  Is there anything you'd like to learn before the next internship begins?

- **Goals and Objectives**
  What did you expect to learn from the internship?
  Were your goals and objectives met?
  Were there goals or objectives you did not reach?

- **Conclusions**
  Overall, what was your impression of the internship experience?
  Include both positive *and* negative impressions
  What will you do differently next semester?
  Did you learn skills you were not planning on?
  How did this internship experience help you as a technician?

Process Analysis

When you analyze a process, you are involved in *describing* how something occurrs, how something is done, or how something is organized. Descriptions such as these are basic to technical writing--particularly in instructions, procedures, patent applications, manuals, and glossaries.

Assignment:
In report format, using topic headings and lists, analyze a process and describe it to a group of readers who are not as knowledgeable on the topic as you are. In order to include sufficient information for your reader, you may need to answer the following questions:

Who, What, When, Where, Why, How? To what extent? Under what conditions?

Organization
Your process analysis should consist of three parts. Each section may use or need subheadings--use them as necessary.

- **Introduction**
  Define your audience
  Define the purpose of explaining the process
  Give a brief background on the process
  Explain *who* is involved, *when* the process takes place, and *where* it occurs

- **Analysis of steps**
  List necessary tools, supplies, parts, etc.
  List the chronological steps (which comes first, second, third, etc.)
  Define the *first* step and its purpose
  Background information (if necessary)
  Special considerations (what happens if you omit this step or perform it incorrectly?)
  Define *second* step and its purpose (then repeat Background and Special considerations)

- **Concluding discussion**
  Results evaluation (results if you perform the process successfully *or* unsuccessfully)
  Time and cost involved
  Disadvantages/Advantages
  Effectiveness
  Importance
  Relationship to a larger process

Date due:_____

Oral Report--Process Analysis

Part of your job as a technician is to explain to others, co-workers and customers, for example--how a process works and how you need to go about completing the process. Using your written Process Analysis report, prepare an oral presentation. Assume that you are the Service Manager of the shop where you work and are explaining this process to a customer who doesn't understand what you are doing.

Guidelines:

- Length: 3 to 5 minutes
- Use *note cards* but do not read your presentation
- Presentation should consist of:
    1. Background information on why audience needs to understand the process
    2. Information on parts and tools needed
    3. Chronological presentation of steps--including any special information such as warnings or exceptions
    4. Information about what may happen if the steps are not completed properly (more breakdowns, serious damage to car, etc.)
    5. Information about what *should happen* if you complete the process successfully; time and cost involved; relationship to a larger process
- Presentation will be evaluated on how well you explain the process to your customer as well as how well you present yourself. Remember to make eye contact!

Evaluation:

Name:_____ **Date:**_____

Introduction Problem clearly explained Sufficient background information Explanation of criteria	2	4	6	8	10
Explanation of Options	2	4	6	8	10
Explanation of Recommendation Based on criteria Your reasons for recommendation	4	8	12	16	20
Conclusion Includes brief summary of entire presentation	2	4	6	8	10

Total _____

Problem-Solving Report

Problem-solving reports ask you to investigate and look at options, ideas, or products to see if they can help you solve a problem. In many cases, a report is written when trying to solve a problem at work--this may be a problem with employees, equipment, or company policies. Your report should state the problem, set criteria for solutions, investigate and analyze possible solutions, and recommend a "best case scenario" based on the information presented.

Assignment:
As part of your job, you have been asked to solve a problem for your company. Write a report explaining the problem, outlining possible solutions, and recommending a "best" solution. Use a memo format and topic headings. **Length: Minimum 2 pages, single-spaced**

Answer these questions:

- Will a given product, program, service, procedure, or policy work for a specific purpose?
- Is one option better than another for a specific purpose?
- How can the problem be solved?
- Is an option practical in a given situation?

Organization
Organize the report in the following manner:

- Explain the problem
- Present standards or criteria (what makes a good solution?)
- Present the information on each option
- Interpret the information (conclusions)
- Recommendation--which solution is best *under the circumstances*

Date due:_____

Topic headings for Problem-Solving Report

Introduction

- State the purpose of the report.
- Define the problem.
- State *what* your report will discuss.

Background

- State the history of the problem. Has it happened before? Has it gotten worse? What caused it?
- Explain how the problem is affecting clients/customers/employees, etc.

Criteria

What characteristics will determine a good solution?

- Explain *what* those characteristics are.
- Explain *why* they are important.
- Be specific.
  --is money involved? time? personnel? additional personnel?

Solution options

Present each solution and what it involves.

- Use a topic heading for each solution.
- *Do not* make any conclusions or recommendations in this section.
- Present *only* the information needed to describe the option.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- *Based on the criteria,* explain which solution *appears* to be the best and explain why.
- What is involved in implementing the solution?
- Which solution do you recommend and why? Explain your decision.

Problem Solving--Oral Report

The oral report you are required to give is part of your training. Since the days of "shade-tree mechanics" are gone, so are the days when it's just enough to be good at turning a wrench. No matter which program you're enrolled in, you will--at some time--be required to present information to others. This assignment gives you a chance to practice!

Guidelines:

- Use *Problem-Solving Report* for content of presentation
- Length: 3-5 minutes You may use note cards, but do not *read* your presentation.
- Presentation should consist of:
  1. Brief introduction telling what the customer's problem with the equipment was.
  2. Brief explanation of each option possible for solving the customer's problem.
  3. Detailed explanation of *why* you chose one of the options for the customer--*based on the criteria for a good solution.*
  4. Brief conclusion summarizing the entire presentation.
- Presentation will be evaluated on how well you explain the problem to your customer as well as how you present yourself. Remember to make eye contact!

Evaluation:

Name:_____ **Date:**_____

Introduction Problem clearly explained Sufficient background information Explanation of criteria	2	4	6	8	10
Explanation of Options	2	4	6	8	10
Explanation of Recommendation Based on criteria Your reasons for recommendation	4	8	12	16	20
Conclusion Includes brief summary of entire presentation	2	4	6	8	10

Total _____

Informal Proposal

Assignment:

Write a proposal (with your instructor as the audience) identifying the problem you want to solve. ***Written in memo format***, this informal proposal is asking permission to continue work on a larger project. Use the content of your Problem-Solving Report. Your memo should be a ***minimum*** of two pages (including visuals).

Remember that your proposal should not only be informative, but also persuasive. In order to convince someone that you have a good proposal, you must convince them (through your writing and the way you present information) that you are the right person to get the job done! **A *formal proposal* may offer to solve a problem for another company. However, your *informal proposal* must be written to your instructor--as the manager who would give you permission to approach another company with a *formal proposal.***

Content and Organization

Organize the material in your memo in a logical manner using headings that reflect the content. Include the following information in your proposal:

- Statement of the problem you will solve--and who for
- Background information and significance of the problem
- Reader's motivation for reading your Proposal
- Proposed Methods/Procedures (how will you solve the problem?)
- Resources (where you will find information that helps solve the problem?)
- Task breakdown and timetable (in visual form)
- Your qualifications and experience
- Costs (to the company)
- Conclusion
- Request for Action (What do you want me to do after reading your proposal?)

View this document as a *process analysis--how you would complete a proposal to another company.*

Visuals

As part of your informal proposal, you must include ***at least two visual aids.*** These may be in the form of a *timetable* (for completing planned work), *flowchart* (showing how your project would be completed), or any other visual we have discussed in class.

Explanation of Topic Headings

Introduction

- Statement of problem and objective
- Background information
- Need for the problem to be solved
- Benefits of solving the problem (who will benefit? how will they benefit?)
- Limitations (are there limits to your solution?)
- Scope (how much ground will you cover?)

Procedure

- Methods (how you plan on solving the problem)
  -Include flowchart showing steps to solving problem
- Timetable (in visual form)

Materials & Equipment

- Materials and equipment needed (present in list form, then explain)
- Personnel required to implement solution (if any)

Cost

- Cost of the solution and breakdown of expenses
  (could be presented in chart form)

Expected Results

- Expected results
- Feasibility of solution (very important!)

Conclusion

- Summary of key information
- Request for action